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1957 OCT 25 Control: 15710

Rec'd: October 25, 1957 1 a.m.

FROM: Guatemala City

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 159, October 24, 9 p.m.

DECLASSIFICATION DATE 6/4/75
PER Fmbno OFFICE ARA
FADRC FOI CASE NO. 5-8-201

NIACT

Federico Carbopell Rodas, President of Congress, Guillermo Vides Castaneda, Vice President Eugenio Silva Pena and Abraham Cobrera Cruz, Deputies, visited me this afternoon and outlined plan solve present crisis which they are confident will be acceptable to Congress. Plan would permit return to constitutionality as follows: Convoke Congress, accept resignation President Gonzalez, declare second designate Guillermo Florez Avendano interim President, call new elections November 24 within four months period in which elections have to be held.

They said junta agreed to this solution and sent Silva Pena in company two military officers to see Ydigoras. During first visit Ydigoras was intransigent. At second visit he agreed make public announcement telling his followers desist from further demonstrations in return for plan of returning to corstitution in manner indicated.

Silva Pena said PR delegation had approached junta which was considering proposal whereunder PR would tell its followers cease demonstrating and would agree purge itself of Communists in return for being allowed to be legalized. This part of plan is not firm and there was decided resistance by three of Congressmen against allowing PR become legalized on any terms. They all thought PR could not in any event organize in time to pose threat in elections.

Group asked me if I would express opinion as to whether USA Government favored return to constitutionality or de facto government. I told them we believed Guatemala's best interests would be served by return to consitiutionality.

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-2- 159, October 24, 9 p.m. from Guatemala City

Congressional delegation plans now try work out details with junta. Delegation was unanimous in repudiating Communism. They said they were convinced Ydigoras was strong anti-Communist and they felt he would almost certainly be elected next President of Guatemala if their scheme was adopted. They are not Ydigoristas although Silva Pena an Independent is friend of Ydigoras. Carbonell and Vides belong to MDN and Cabrera is Liberal. All agreed MDN was washed up and it probably would not even participate in next elections although there would be no objection to its doing so. Visitors believed their proposal would meet with general acceptance among army and people. They also believed MDN is too weak now to oppose it.

This proposal appears to be best and perhaps only practicable means returning to constitutionality and avoiding bloodshed. Unless adopted Guatemala might have go through long and unsettling experience of drafting new constitution, holding new elections for Constituent Assembly and later for new President. Ydigoras Fuentes, who likely will emerge as new President, has few faults but he is anti-Communist and seems have widespread popular support and genuine qualities of leadership. Under circumstances no better solution suggests itself.

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NIACT

This afternoon members of Junta and some newly named Cabinet members held press conference. After announcing new Cabinet, Colonel Mendoza stated Junta hoped country could return soon to constitutional normality when Junta could be dissolved. He said new elections were being considered and would be discussed with General Ydigoras that state of siege would be lifted soon as calm returns and meanwhile Junta had no objections to peaceful demonstrations. He said no constitutional changes were contemplated, that Junta would honor all existing treaties and agreements and intended that Guatemala continue as a member of ODECA. He said Junta would be impartial and neutral in all decisions and asked for help and understanding of press and people in task of returning country to constitutional normality soonest. He said that in new elections there will be no official candidate, and that Guatemalans will elect whomever they please. In reviewing history of Juntas coming into being, Mendoza said early October 23, Oliva called in Army Chiefs to confer on situation and it was decided establish Junta with Oliva as member. Opposition to Oliva developed. After long discussions secret ballot election among Army Chiefs resulted in present Junta.

Following are Cabinet members: Foreign Affairs Adolfo Molina Orantes; Interior Carlos Enrique de Leon; Defense Roberto Lorenzana Salazar; Treasury Rabriel Orellana; Economy and Labor Carlos Enrique Peralta; Communications Oliverio Casasola; Education Marco Aurelio Merida; Agriculture Guillermo Pacheco; Public Health Alejandro Palomom.

Other officials named were Secretary General of Junta Rodrigo Robles Chinchilla; (Private) Secretary General of Junta Jose Luis Aguilar de Leon; Police Chief Antonio Pilona Acordero;

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Director of National Security Eduardo Ocho; Secretary of Information Ramiro Gereda Asturias.

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OCT 29 1957